

"Living a Real Christian Life" - Ephesians 4:1 – April 15th, 2018

- I want to talk to you today about what it really means to live a real Christian life in unity, purity, harmony and especially victory.
 - I know I run the risk of sounding sensational when I say this, but I wish I would have known about this much sooner in my life.
 - This because, this simple truth is changing everything for me in the way I live my Christian life, in that it's a get to not a got to.
- Beginning in chapter four, the Apostle Paul turns a corner going from what God did for us, to our response to what He's done.
 - In chapters one through three, Paul, by the Holy Spirit, wrote with marvelous detail all that God did for us because He loves us.
 - As such, in chapters four through six, Paul practically explains how our Christian lives can be lived as a result of what God did.
- In chapter 4:1-16, he explains how our lives can be lived in unity. In 4:17-5:18, he explains how our lives can be lived in purity.
 - In chapter 5:19 through chapter 6:9, Paul explains how our Christian lives can be lived in harmony together with other people.
 - Then, in chapter 6:10-24, Paul explains how our Christian lives can be lived in victory specifically as it relates to spiritual attack.
- If you were to ask me what I thought was the main reason that we as Christians live a joyless and defeated life, this would be it.
 - Namely, that of trying in our own strength to do that which only God can do in us, vis-à-vis that which He's already done for us.
 - When I fully understand all that God has first done for me then my response is to obey Him out of my love and worship for Him.

1 John 4:19 - We love Him because He first loved us.

John 14:15 - "If you love me, you will obey what I command."

- The problem is that we get it backwards and live our lives trying to obey God in order to get him to love us, which never works.
 - Simply put, this is a relationship based on works instead of grace, in the sense that I have to earn God's love to be worthy of it.
 - I would suggest that the majority of Christians live their lives in this way, and I say that as one who still struggles with this today.
- The truth of the matter is, innate within every one of us is this propensity to live our lives like we have to instead of we want to.
 - In other words, I'll want to respond in this way, not to earn His love and blessing, rather, to express my praise and thanksgiving.
 - The result of this response is a life lived that's proportionate to what God has done reflected in our daily life with Jesus Christ.
- I suppose now the question that needs to be asked is that of what living a real Christian life really looks like daily in my own life.
 - Actually, the Apostle Paul will answer this in the last three chapters of Ephesians dealing with our interpersonal relationships.
 - Specifically as it relates to husbands, wives, parents, children, employees, employers and especially related to other Christians.
- Suffice it to say, I am really looking forward to teaching the rest of the epistle because I know it can change our Christian lives.
 - As for the aforementioned question of what living a real Christian life really looks, I want to draw your attention to king David.
 - If there were ever a man who obeyed God and lived a life of purity and victory in response to what God did, David would be it.

Psalm 51 (NKJV) — To the Chief Musician. A Psalm of David When Nathan the Prophet Went to Him, After He Had Gone in to Bathsheba. 1 Have mercy upon me, O God, According to Your lovingkindness; According to the multitude of Your tender mercies, Blot out my transgressions. 2 Wash me thoroughly from my iniquity, And cleanse me from my sin. 3 For I acknowledge my transgressions, And my sin is always before me. 4 Against You, You only, have I sinned, And done this evil in Your sight— That You may be found just when You speak, And blameless when You judge. 5 Behold, I was brought forth in iniquity, And in sin my mother conceived me. 6 Behold, You desire truth in the inward parts, And in the hidden part You will make me to know wisdom. 7 Purge me with hyssop, and I shall be clean; Wash me, and I shall be whiter than snow. 8 Make me hear joy and gladness, That the bones You have broken may rejoice. 9 Hide Your face from my sins, And blot out all my iniquities. 10 Create in me a clean heart, O God, And renew a steadfast spirit within me. 11 Do not cast me away from Your presence, And do not take Your Holy Spirit from me. 12 Restore to me the joy of Your salvation, And uphold me by Your generous Spirit. 13 Then I will teach transgressors Your ways, And sinners shall be converted to You. 14 Deliver me from the guilt of bloodshed, O God, The God of my salvation, And my tongue shall sing aloud of Your righteousness. 15 O Lord, open my lips, And my mouth shall show forth Your praise. 16 For You do not desire sacrifice, or else I would give it; You do not delight in burnt offering. 17 The sacrifices of God are a broken spirit, A broken and a contrite heart— These, O God, You will not despise. 18 Do good in Your good pleasure to Zion; Build the walls of Jerusalem. 19 Then You shall be pleased with the sacrifices of righteousness, With burnt offering and whole burnt offering; Then they shall offer bulls on Your altar.

- I'll close by simply saying once David tasted from the cup of God's grace and mercy, it changed his life, for the rest of his life.
- So too is this true for us, once we realize just how much we've been on the receiving end of all God did for us, it will change us.
- So much so, that our response will become one of wanting to live a life that is pleasing and acceptable in the sight of the Lord.